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New York

President:	Mr. Gayama	(Congo)
Members:	Belgium	Mrs. Delieux
	China	Mr. Du Xiaocong
	France	Mr. Veyssiere
	Ghana	Mr. Yankey
	Indonesia	Mr. Budiman
	Italy	Mr. Mantovani
	Panama	Mr. Suescum
	Peru	Ms. Tincopa
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Henzab
	Russian Federation	Mr. Smirnov
	Slovakia	Mr. Mlynar
	South Africa	Mr. Crowley
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Hoare
	United States of America	Mr. McBride

Agenda

Maintenance of international peace and security

Role of the Security Council in conflict prevention and resolution, in particular in Africa

Letter dated 14 August 2007 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Congo to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2007/496)

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07-49201 (E)

The meeting resumed at 3.10 p.m.

The President (*spoke in French*): I wish to remind all speakers, as I indicated at this morning's session, to limit their statements to no more than five minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Delegations with lengthy statements are kindly requested to circulate the texts in writing and to deliver a condensed version when speaking in the Chamber.

I now call on the representative of Uganda.

Mr. Butagira (Uganda): On behalf of my delegation, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this important debate. Uganda attaches great importance to the issue of the maintenance of international peace and security. Because of time constraints, I will try to be brief in my intervention.

First of all, the responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security is primarily that of the Security Council, in line with the provisions of the Charter. However, this issue concerns us all. Indeed, the 2005 World Summit Outcome (General Assembly resolution 60/1) brings out this issue clearly. Its paragraph 71 states:

> "We acknowledge that we are living in an interdependent and global world and that many of today's threats recognize no national boundaries, are interlinked and must be tackled at the global, regional and national levels in accordance with the Charter and international law".

Unfortunately, some conflicts, especially in Africa, tend to disappear from the international radar. A case in point is the situation in Somalia, which until recently had enjoyed low visibility. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the international community, and especially the Security Council, to give equal attention to conflicts that may threaten international peace and security wherever they occur.

There are many causes of conflict; I will highlight just two. First, in developing countries, especially in Africa, poverty is a serious threat to peace and security. The need to address poverty, therefore, can hardly be overemphasized. The Security Council should see poverty as a threat to international peace and security, and therefore exert the necessary pressure and attention towards poverty alleviation, especially by giving the necessary support to policies designed by Member States to eradicate poverty.

Secondly, democracy can be both a blessing and a curse. It is a blessing because, where it is genuinely applied, it allows citizens to participate in determining the way in which they are governed. However, democracy can also be a curse if it is viewed as one-size-fits-all. Here, it is important to recall what our leaders stated in paragraph 135 of the 2005 World Summit Outcome:

> "We also reaffirm that while democracies share common features, there is no single model of democracy, that it does not belong to any country or region, and reaffirm the necessity of due respect for sovereignty and the right of self-determination".

There has been an unfortunate tendency on the part of some Western democracies to push their model onto developing countries without due regard for peculiarities and circumstances in those countries. In Africa, for instance, where there is a multiplicity of ethnic groups, the rush to introduce democracy without first building a nation can be a disaster. For example, a predominant tribe that exploits its numerical strength may emerge a victor if the model of "one man, one vote" is adopted. It may therefore monopolize power, to the exclusion of minority tribes. The minority tribes that are thus marginalized and excluded from power may resort to violence in order to redress the power imbalance.

In that scenario, therefore, what is required first is to build a nation by introducing measures that transcend tribal affiliation. For instance, the use of a common language, as was the case in Tanzania with Swahili, can be a useful tool; hence, the need to move cautiously before a rush to introduce multiparty democracy in developing countries. Yes, elections and multiparty democracy can be useful, but, as I have outlined, they cannot be the only considerations with regard to the issue of democracy.

I want to comment on the role of the Security Council with regard to peacekeeping. Traditionally, the approach adopted by the Security Council has been the following: where there is no peace to keep, peacekeeping operations should not be authorized. Sadly, that has been the case with Somalia. In my view, the Security Council should liberate itself from this tight box and, where circumstances demand, actively

promote peacemaking as well. The presence of United Nations peacekeepers in conflict-ridden areas may itself help efforts towards peacemaking. Hence, we have been urging the Security Council expeditiously to deploy United Nations peacekeepers in Somalia to replace the African Union (AU) force.

Ironically, by proxy or indirectly through the authorization of African Union peacekeepers, the Security Council is in fact already taking part in peacemaking. We cannot, therefore, understand the logic that prevents the Security Council from directly authorizing a United Nations peacekeeping force now, instead of postponing the matter to a possible deployment in the future, as called for by Security Council resolution 1772 (2007). Uganda, whose troops are in Somalia under the African Union Mission in Somalia, is proud to make its humble contribution towards peacemaking in that country.

In its role of maintaining international peace and security, the Security Council should dwell more on preventive measures, without, of course, minimizing the importance of resolving conflicts when they flare up. Lastly, the Security Council should press for the necessary logistical and financial support to be provided to those countries that are undertaking peacekeeping operations on its behalf under Chapter VIII of the Charter.

Mr. Briz Gutiérrez (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): We welcome the initiative taken by your delegation, Mr. President, in convening today's open debate. My delegation welcomes the concept paper that has been drawn up and the statements by the representatives of the Secretariat this morning. We are sure this will all contribute to achieving the necessary strengthening of our collective capacity within the United Nations for conflict prevention and resolution.

Guatemala's own experience has taught us lessons that place us in a privileged position to comment on a number of the concerns appearing in the discussion document circulated by the presidency. Something we have learned through our discussions and exchange of lessons learned is that reducing risk and taking preventive action to avoid threats to peace are the best ways of attenuating irreparable and irreversible harm.

Prevention is a shared responsibility embodied in the principles of the United Nations Charter, Article 1 of which calls for effective collective measures to prevent and eliminate threats to peace. Likewise, conflict prevention is best reflected in Chapter VI, particularly through the peaceful means contained in Article 33.

Prevention is a fundamental responsibility of States. The United Nations and the international community play a subsidiary support role to national endeavours. In that sense, we draw attention to the importance in any prevention endeavour of building national capacity in those areas, and the need to promote dialogue with all actors and to include the valuable contribution of civil society.

In terms of preventive measures, we are of the view that conflict prevention should be dealt with from the perspective of the fullest protection of the rule of law — the essential concept for the stability of any democratic State guaranteeing human rights and fundamental freedoms. Moreover, the measures should focus primarily on countering the underlying root causes of conflict, including socio-economic, cultural and religious causes, the management of natural resources and sustainable development considerations.

Attention should also be given to the fact that preventive action calls for attention to gender equality and the situation of children, among others. For that reason, my delegation considers it particularly useful that the most recent report of the Secretary-General on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa is to be welcomed. It is encouraging to note the progress that has been made over the last year on the African continent as a whole, although much remains to be done. Further activity should be undertaken in order to avoid a recurrence of crises and to ensure the peace that has been won with such difficulty in countries emerging from conflict.

The Peacebuilding Commission should also work hand in hand with the Security Council, in particular in assessing the progress that has been made and in evaluating the numerous factors that may determine its course. Among other issues we might mention the nature of the underlying conflict, the identification of vulnerable groups such as indigenous peoples, children, the situation and the role of women, the consequences of peace agreements for the rule of law, together with the different traditions that may coexist in a given country and which have an impact on the

development of the system of justice and on the adaptation of legal rules in the country.

Guatemala has always supported the importance of a firm and determined approach to endeavours to build prevention capacity within the Organization in keeping with the principles and objectives of the United Nations Charter and international law.

Allow us to take this opportunity to congratulate the new Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Africa. We trust that the Office will carry out its work within the mandate established by the General Assembly as it has to date.

I wish to briefly touch on some of the recommendations highlighted in the concept paper. With regard to the recommendation of the Secretary-General that the Group of Friends for the prevention of conflict be institutionalized and made into a formal forum, Guatemala is of the view that there are already enough formal forums addressing the matter and that what is needed is to close the unacceptable divide between discourse and reality.

We have analysed the report of the Secretary-General on the prevention of armed conflict and are of the view that there is a lot of redundancy. For that reason, we feel that instead of establishing a new forum, it would be important to strengthen coordination and coherence within the system.

My delegation believes it is premature to discuss the possible role of the Mediation Support Unit adopted within the Department for Political Affairs (DPA), since the unit has not yet been set up. It is difficult to see, as yet, how the unit will deal with conflict prevention matters when, as we understand it, the Secretariat has not yet filled all of the vacant posts approved by the General Assembly. We understand that the DPA will be very soon submitting to the General Assembly a report on the restructuring of that Department. We hope that in the report the Secretary-General will explain in detail to the General Assembly his ideas on the role that may be played by the unit in conflict prevention.

Guatemala wishes to take this opportunity to welcome the appointment of Mr. Jan Egeland as Special Adviser to the Secretary-General. It is certain that his experience and training will ensure that he can make considerable progress in conflict mediation. We hope to see the outcome of his work in synergy with the Mediation Unit.

Guatemala wishes to congratulate Liberia for the progress made in that country and the positive steps that have been taken. That is a real example of stability and strengthening in the region and an example that makes us feel optimistic regarding the future progress of our brothers in the region. We also congratulate the Government of Sierra Leone for the peaceful environment in which the recent presidential and parliamentary elections were held, since the withdrawal of the United Nations mission in December 2005.

Guatemala welcomes the memorandum of understanding signed in Addis Ababa on 16 November 2006 between the United Nations and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, with the acceptance of the Government of the Sudan, regarding a hybrid operation in Darfur and consequently the adoption by the Security Council of resolution 1769 (2007). However, we believe that it is necessary for the Security Council, when focusing on Darfur, not to put aside the situation between the north and south of the country. While a ceasefire has progressed successfully, it is necessary to tackle the causes of the conflict. Otherwise, there is a danger that hostilities may resume, not only between the north and south but also throughout the country.

Lastly, I wish to reiterate my country's commitment to the peacekeeping operations of the United Nations in Africa. Guatemala is proud to be taking an increasingly active part in all peacekeeping operations in the region, since we are certain those operations will benefit the Organization in fulfilling the objectives and principles of the Charter.

Mr. Hoang Chi Trung (Viet Nam): On behalf of the Vietnamese delegation, I wish to congratulate you, Sir, and the Republic of the Congo for your effective leadership of the work of the Security Council this month. We warmly welcome your initiative to hold this important open debate and highly appreciate your substantive concept paper to that end.

My delegation shares the view expressed previously by various delegations that it is pertinent for the Council to revisit the question of its role in conflict prevention and resolution on a regular basis. The Charter of the United Nations stipulates that the

Security Council has the primary role in the maintenance of international peace and security.

Given the alarming devastations caused by contemporary intra-State and interstate conflicts, there is an overwhelming agreement that durable peace can be achieved at a much lower cost in human and material terms through comprehensive and integrated prevention strategies. Over the years, the Security Council and the General Assembly have adopted a number of resolutions on the question of prevention and resolution of conflicts.

In this connection, my delegation wishes to recall that General Assembly resolution 60/1, which was adopted at the 2005 World Summit, underlines the importance of prevention of armed conflicts in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter and promotes a culture of prevention as a means to effectively address the interconnected security and development challenges faced by many nations in the world. Security Council resolution 1625 (2005), while highlighting the need for strengthening the Council's role in conflict prevention, particularly in Africa, reaffirms the principles of refraining from the threat or the use of force and of peaceful settlements of international disputes.

Equally important, the international community has attached greater importance to such interdependent and complementary components as early warning, preventive diplomacy and demobilization, disarmament and reintegration of ex-combatants, as well as post-conflict peacebuilding. There is also agreement on the need for greater coordination and cooperation among United Nations organs, Member States, regional and subregional organizations, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and other civil society actors to help war-ravaged countries to break out of the vicious cycle of poverty, conflict and underdevelopment and move into the mainstream of globalization.

For the past decades, Africa — the second largest and second most populous continent — has been grappling with protracted civil wars, ethnic strife, extreme poverty and humanitarian tragedies. In spite of certain remarkable progress in some areas, the African continent continues to have the lowest share of global foreign direct investment flows while shouldering a growing debt burden and suffering from inequitable global trade regimes. All these tremendous challenges instil in the international community a momentum of broad support for addressing the root causes of conflicts in the continent and reinvigorating socio-economic development in the African countries.

In the spirit of solidarity with African countries, Viet Nam supports fully the initiatives of the African Union and the concerned subregional organizations to prevent, mediate and resolve conflicts through peaceful negotiations, with stronger support from the United Nations. Viet Nam has followed with keen interest the implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) programmes, especially within the South-South cooperation framework, and notes with satisfaction that significant headway has been made in the fight against hunger, poverty, malaria, tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS and in other fields and sectors such as infrastructure, health, education, science and technology development. Together with the international community, we shall continue to explore ways and means to further contribute to the cause of peace, development and integration of the African countries.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Kenya.

Mr. Muburi-Muita (Kenya): My delegation welcomes the decision of the Security Council to hold an open debate to consider how to enhance its effectiveness in conflict prevention and resolution, particularly in Africa. We wish to hail this Congolese initiative and to applaud the support of the Secretary-General.

This year has turned out to be a turning point on matters of international peace and security, not only for the United Nations but also for the African Union. Recently, the Security Council finally adopted a resolution authorizing its peacekeeping mission destined for Darfur and also extended the mandate of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). We look forward to seeing full implementation of these two resolutions. My country will work to support both missions.

Foremost among the challenges of the Darfur mission is the urgency to improve the safety and security of the civilian populations.

Kenya recognizes the good work being done by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Horn of Africa,

particularly in Somalia. The great effort to coordinate the humanitarian work by United Nations relief agencies and that of other international bodies has saved the lives of a great number of the internally displaced persons and has ameliorated the condition of the sick and other vulnerable groups. These humanitarian agencies are operating in extremely difficult circumstances, and my delegation calls upon the international community to support them.

The ongoing restructuring of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations might be construed to mean that the United Nations is gearing itself up to building sufficient capacity to deal with numerous complex peacekeeping missions. It is instinctive to observe that peacekeeping is more expensive than conflict prevention. The energies and resources of the United Nations should therefore be channelled more to conflict prevention through use of its good offices to address potential root causes of conflicts at the earliest stages, before full escalation. These include Increasing economic opportunities and promoting the culture of inclusive politics to avoid marginalization and alienation of large sections of populations, which often leads to conflict.

Peace, security and development are mutually interdependent. This is based on the realization that there can never be development in the absence of peace and security, while, on the other hand, peace and security are prerequisites for development. Lack of development, poverty, deprivation and suffering are all breeding grounds for insecurity. In this respect, my delegation would add that the ongoing United Nations reform should ensure that proper working mechanisms are put into place between the peace and security organs, namely, the Peacebuilding Commission and the Security Council on the one hand, and the development arms of the United Nations, especially the Economic and Social Council, on the other.

Kenya welcomes the support that the United Nations is giving to the African Union in accordance with Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter. We call upon both bodies to deepen the cooperation in order to enhance the capacity of the AU to handle regional security issues, especially through the African Union Peace and Security Council.

While commending the Security Council for its good work, let me mention that, unfortunately, all too often it has been stuck in its traditional approach of peacekeeping. In most conflict situations, there will be no peace to keep, and yet the international community will be looking to the United Nations to deal with the situation, as eloquently articulated by the Permanent Representative of fellow East African Community partner State, Uganda.

It is a commonly held view that the United Nations preconditions that a country at conflict must have a peace to keep in order for the United Nations to deploy is untenable. To put it in context, the reason for which a country allows foreign troops on its soil is to create — not to keep — peace. The high-sounding argument that there has to be political agreements between warring factions is itself misplaced. Intra-State conflicts require a neutral party to mediate between the warring parties and a credible neutral force to protect civilians and facilitate humanitarian effort.

My country continues to shoulder great responsibilities in our region of Africa on the subject under discussion. As the current Chair of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and the Great Lakes Forum, Kenya has spearheaded aggressive regional political initiatives to change the situation. We will continue to pursue these goals as we call upon the international community — and especially the United Nations Security Council — to remain seized of the matter.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Mr. Ileka (Democratic Republic of the Congo) (*spoke in French*): First of all, it is my pleasure to express our delegation's satisfaction at seeing the Council chaired this month by the representative of our sister Republic of the Congo, with which my country has excellent relations, characterized by the seal of trust and mutual respect.

I would also like to thank you, Mr. President, for having organized this meeting of the Council. The active participation of the Secretary-General, the Deputy Secretary-General, the Vice-President of the General Assembly and the representative of the Peacebuilding Commission clearly illustrates the importance that our universal Organization attaches to the role that the Security Council should play in the prevention and resolution of conflict, especially in Africa.

The persistence of conflicts in Africa has given rise to serious and complex problems, including massive flows of refugees, internally displaced persons, the spread of infectious diseases, the proliferation of weapons and drugs, the destruction of crucial basic infrastructure and the devastation of ecosystems and the environment. It is essential that the international community as a whole realize that the stability and prosperity of Africa is important for all humankind, and that the development and improvement of its well-being requires appropriate actions both by Africans themselves and by their bilateral and multilateral partners.

With regard to preventing conflict in Africa, there is a need to ensure the coherence and operational effectiveness of existing mechanisms. For example, the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, whose twenty-sixth ministerial meeting will be held in Cameroon next week, is among the appropriate frameworks for cooperation in identifying destabilizing factors in order to rebuild lasting trust at the regional level.

With regard to peacebuilding, concrete relevant initiatives usually include disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programmes, the strengthening of political and judicial local institutions, efforts to promote reconciliation among the population, security sector reform and respect for human rights and the rule of law.

We commend the Office of the Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Africa for facilitating the holding of the second United Nations Conference on DDR and Stability in Africa, which was held in Kinshasa from 12 to 14 June 2007. The meeting was a success in terms of the quality of the debate, the level of participation and the relevance of the recommendations made. I would therefore like to emphasize the importance of such conferences, as well as to call for the incorporation of the recommendations made at the Conference into peacebuilding strategies for post-conflict societies.

Transitional justice — whose goal is to provide a feeling of justice for all citizens, to establish or renew civic confidence and to reconcile peoples and communities — has a key role to play in conflict prevention and resolution.

Organized crime, whether national or trans-national in nature, and the greater firepower and higher numbers of weapons, both legal and illegal, as well as their level of availability, have been identified as contributing factors in the outbreak of conflict.

Faced with the inability of national judicial systems to meet the new challenges in re-establishing justice in post-conflict societies, relying on truth and reconciliation commissions alone is not enough. We must further consider using prosecutorial mechanisms to punish the perpetrators of serious crimes, without neglecting the issue of providing reparations to the victims of those crimes. That is the role currently being played by the International Criminal Court. In that connection, the role of the Court in the prevention of conflict and the consolidation of peace in post-conflict situations should be underlined.

It is important that justice trump politics and diplomacy at a certain stage in peace processes. In that regard, I should like to reiterate our appeal for the establishment of an international criminal tribunal for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where millions of innocent people have lost their lives following breaches of the peace. Such a body could further contribute to avoiding such outrageous situations as the one that prevails in my country today, where notorious murderers, perfidious generals and warlords are the primary interlocutors of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and therefore of the United Nations.

With regard to providing solutions, I would like to urge the ratification of, and prompt adherence to, legal and related instruments, such as the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region.

We should also underscore the need to integrate civil society into conflict resolution processes in Africa, given the fact that the tools traditionally employed to manage crises have become largely useless on the continent.

Beyond those considerations, in addition to adopting and implementing policies aimed at economic recovery, reducing poverty and improving governance, education is the best and safest investment we can make to bring about peace in Africa and the world, both today and in the future. In that regard, we must instil the ideal of peace in the educational system, especially as regards young people. It is important that we make them aware of the importance of the values of tolerance and diversity, as well as teaching them the

virtues of ethical values based upon traditional heritage, all the while providing them with an opening to the world to allow them also to gather universal values.

In order to ensure implementation and follow-up vis-à-vis the prevention and resolution of conflicts, one important step is to strengthen the Secretary-General's capacities for mediation and good offices efforts, in accordance with the 2005 World Summit decision that established a Mediation Support Unit in the Department of Political Affairs. Moreover, the Peacebuilding Support Office should be strengthened by substantially stepping up the work of the Peacebuilding Fund.

We could also consider establishing a system to ensure that regional organizations, and especially the African Union, enjoy predictable and long-term financing for their peacekeeping operations. Such an initiative could be undertaken by strengthening cooperation — for example, through the partnership mechanisms that exist between the peace and security entities of the United Nations and the African Union — in the areas of conflict prevention and resolution, peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Croatia.

Mrs. Mladineo (Croatia): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this timely exchange of views. We sincerely hope that today's deliberations will help us to better understand, and take stock of, the progress made thus far.

Although the Republic of Croatia has aligned itself with the statement made by the representative of Portugal on behalf of the European Union, I would like to take this opportunity to share with the Council some of our thoughts on today's topic.

Croatia recognizes the primary responsibility of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security. In that context, we regard conflict prevention as one of the core duties that the Security Council is charged with carrying out on behalf of all Member States of the United Nations. Nevertheless, we firmly believe that conflict prevention goes way beyond the membership of the Security Council. In that sense, all Member States, to the best of their knowledge and capacities, have the responsibility to address the underlying causes of conflict, in hopes of preventing them.

But what makes the task of conflict prevention so difficult is the fact that we do not have a dedicated system in place that would automatically, shall we say, "take care of business". We have in place various worthwhile initiatives, forums and bodies — all of which are in need of a comprehensive approach to streamline their activities.

Reading the list of the major causes of conflict in Africa — starting with endemic poverty and widespread underdevelopment, and in some cases undemocratic, weak or nonexistent Government institutions, and political and economic discrimination — one realizes that a single United Nations body cannot do the job alone. Most of the issues that I have just referred to fall under the purview of various bodies and organizations of the United Nations system. Therefore, the internal logic of the United Nations system holds that substantive cooperation and effective coordination are the only way to succeed in conflict prevention.

Since Croatia's presidency of the Economic and Social Council, when Ad Hoc Advisory Groups for African countries emerging from conflict were established, Croatia has supported better coordination among the main bodies of the United Nations — the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council — as well as with the Peacebuilding Commission, as a new advisory body. Likewise, we have supported including in that coordination other important regional and subregional organizations that have already successfully dealt with local crises.

With respect to the regional and subregional groups and their role in Africa, we have response mechanisms for dealing with both old and new security challenges. The problem lies within their ad hoc nature. However, a clear trend is emerging toward their formalization and institutionalization. The Economic Community of West African States provides an excellent example of this process, having intervened in both Liberia and Sierra Leone in the 1990s. The cooperation of the United Nations with such a regional player and with broader organizations such as the African Union can only benefit all parties involved.

Allow me to also point out that even a small country with rich experience in conflict such as,

unfortunately, Croatia, can provide beneficial and constructive input to United Nations conflict prevention and conflict-resolving activities. So far, our post-conflict knowledge has been put to use mostly through our participation in 14 United Nations peacekeeping missions all over the world and through our work in the first session of the Peacebuilding Commission.

There are two lessons learned that we always like to repeat: first, there is no "one-size-fits-all" approach, and any attempt to build upon such an approach leads to failure; and second, gaining a deeper understanding of the roots of any conflict is of utmost importance, because it prevents us from following the easier path of patching up a situation and not resolving the fundamental antagonisms in a society, which can have the effect of leaving a wound to fester. This is as important before a conflict or crisis have arisen as it is after: before, because it can help avoid a conflict; and after, because it can help cure open wounds.

We can all agree that experience teaches us that any crisis can be better handled in its early stages. Therefore, an approach that would encompass a better early warning system, so as to identify potential crises before they emerge, is of utmost importance. We believe it is also true that the early identification of and reaction to problems that countries face have a positive effect on their later development. Unfortunately, we all know where ignoring the signs can lead in the long run. In this sense, we understand too well the importance of time and timeliness for the countries, in particularly African, that were or are currently on the Security Council's agenda, as Croatia was in the 1990s.

Finally, I would like to express our hope for an opportunity, as well as for our determination to use it, to share the lessons learned in order to act and not merely to react.

The President (*spoke in French*): I give the floor to the representative of Honduras.

Mr. Romero-Martínez (Honduras) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on behalf of the delegation of Honduras, for the initiative you took in holding this important debate on a subject that concerns us all.

In keeping with the Charter of the United Nations, the Security Council has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Therefore, these topics cannot be a matter of indifference to us, as countries of Latin America that have also experienced conflict and that aspire to a lasting and sustainable peace throughout the world.

We appreciate the presence of the Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, this morning, and of the Deputy Secretary-General, Mrs. Asha-Rose Migiro. We also welcome the statements by our colleagues, Mr. Léo Mérorès, on behalf of the presidency of the General Assembly, and Mr. Leslie Kojo Christian, acting Chairman of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission. Their presence reveals the interest and support that they attribute to initiatives of this kind.

As stated in the report of the Secretary-General (A/60/891), conflict prevention, which is the responsibility of national governments, is one of the main obligations in the Charter of United Nations. Indeed, major advances have been achieved in terms of standard setting and on the political and institutional fronts. However, as has been repeated, a gap continues to exist, at times unbridgeable and unacceptable, between word and deed.

We all agree that prevention is one of the cornerstones of peacekeeping. We all also agree that a lack of justice is a decisive factor in the emergence of conflict in any part of the world where it occurs. The proliferation of small arms, the inappropriate exploitation of natural resources, the lack of appropriate and just gender equality, the indifference to efforts to combat HIV/AIDS, ongoing violations of human rights, the denial of education and a tremendous lack of awareness of the value of human life constitute severe blows to the integrity of a world that is expanding and yet increasingly alienated. That is in addition to the thousands of smiles on the faces of young children whose hopes have been frustrated by the terrifying sound of machine guns or the exchange of their school books for the terrible weight of a weapon.

For this reason, today's debate provides us with an opportunity to reflect deeply on our responsibilities within this world Organization. This debate allows us to analyse past experiences and consider new approaches that, as promises of good things to come, have been submitted by different delegations today, innovative initiatives that allow us to find solutions in

the short term, under the current circumstances. It is now important to find the mechanisms, creativity and political will to carry out actions that will, in the short term, allow us to glimpse a solution that will move us towards social and political stability on every continent.

We commend the work of the African Union and the recent memorandums of understanding that have been signed. The concluding document of the African Union Summit of January 2007, held in Addis Ababa, stated that the maintenance of international peace and security, as we stated at the outset, is the primary responsibility of the United Nations Security Council. Likewise, in the World Summit Outcome, heads of State and Government meeting in New York encouraged and supported the initiatives of the African Union and of the subregional African organizations to prevent conflict, engage in mediation or settle conflicts with the assistance of the United Nations.

It therefore follows that Honduras and its delegation believe that conflict prevention is vital in any part of the world, and we support a peaceful solution to international disputes and mandatory compliance with the rulings of the International Court of Justice. We believe in a volition for prevention, and we believe that there should be a framework and a legal commitment of national and international guarantees, and if we create that, we will be making progress in the genuine establishment of a vocation for peace and universal understanding.

To conclude, we would like, on behalf of my country, to state that we hope to see the establishment of an appropriate mechanism for the prevention of international conflicts.

Today's debate has been an important initiative of focusing on the brothers in Africa, and we are sure that in the short term, with political determination, it will culminate in successful processes of stabilization and restoring peace.

Today should serve as an example of deep meditation and reflection on the thousands of conflicts that can emerge in any corner of the hemisphere. No region is immune.

While great inequality, injustice and, above all, the denial of the value of human life persist, then the threat of conflict will remain. Therefore, we must all accept as a firm commitment that which is set out in the Charter of the United Nations, namely "to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small".

The President (*spoke in French*): I call now on the representative of Algeria.

Mr. Yousfi (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): First of all, I would like to commend you, Mr. President, for your competent handling of the work of the Council in this month of August, and to pay tribute to your predecessor, Ambassador Wang Guangya of China, for his excellent presidency of the Council in July.

My delegation would also like to commend you, Mr. President, for this positive initiative that you have taken in organizing this debate and for the wise choice of the theme. The problem of conflict prevention and resolution and the role expected of the Security Council in that area is worthy of examination in all its dimensions.

One single figure cited in the document on the terms of reference for this debate (S/2007/496) — which you were kind enough to prepare for us, Mr. President — concerning the exponential cost of peacekeeping operations illustrates how vital it is for the international community to come up with a real conflict prevention strategy that would go beyond detecting symptoms of crises to encompass — and here the role and responsibility of the Council would be essential — unresolved conflicts like Western Sahara and other conflicts. The Council should, in this respect, reflect upon the example of the crisis in Somalia and learn the lessons from it, becoming fully involved in the search for just and lasting solutions, as called for in the Charter.

In other words, we expect from this debate and from the decision that it will sanction if it fails to come up with a plan of action a political will that represents a break with the indecision that has prevailed in the past and that has been and continues to be very costly to the international community.

In fact, the cost parameter is certainly not the most determinative one when we evaluate the destructive consequences of conflicts. In reality, the true equation resides in the number of countries devastated by conflicts, in the millions of lives lost and in the suffering inflicted on civilian populations, especially among the most vulnerable categories,

because of a crisis that we have not known how to, been able to — or sometimes even wanted to — stamp out at the right time and at the least cost.

Once more, it is not a matter of further investment in analyses and in elements of a strategy that remains to be hatched, despite the extreme importance of these aspects. We cannot deny that beyond common causes, each conflict situation has its own complex dynamic. It is, however, just as true that the United Nations has for almost two decades been examining the phenomenon of conflicts by analyzing their causes and by suggesting the means for their prevention and resolution.

In fact, since the publication of An Agenda for Peace (S/24111) in 1992, other reports and other studies have enriched our collective knowledge of conflicts and as a result have assisted in the development of relevant approaches for conflict prevention. The reports of the Secretary-General — the most recent of which have to do, respectively, with the causes of conflict in Africa and the promotion of sustainable peace and development in Africa, and the possibilities and challenges of partnership in the area of security on a regional and a global scale — contain an analysis and relevant proposals that only need to be implemented.

Additionally, the General Assembly and the Security Council have adopted decisions that, unfortunately, have not been completely implemented. Resolution 1625 (2005) — which Algeria had the honour to co-sponsor with Benin and Tanzania, then members of the Council — proposes a platform of action and elements for a coherent, comprehensive strategy for conflict prevention, particularly in Africa. It specified the terms of an effective partnership between the United Nations and the African Union and its subregional organizations and between that partnership and international and regional partners, without neglecting the role and contribution of civil society.

It is a matter of realizing the objectives of this resolution and strengthening it, if needed, by relying on new ideas, especially when they involve capacity-building of the African Union in the areas of prevention by assisting it to improve its system of early warning, of collection and analysis of information, and of mediation. One way that might help us in moving forward would be the establishment of a mechanism for the periodic review of this resolution, such as what is done for Council resolutions having to do with women, children and the protection of civilians during armed conflicts.

From our standpoint, for any conflict prevention strategy to be effective, it must be based on at least two key axes. The first has to do with the coordination of efforts to ensure that the discreet action of preventive diplomacy and good offices might succeed in the case of conflicts in gestation. Through his responsibilities, it is upon the Secretary-General, of course, that this task devolves. This coordination must also prevail in post-conflict stabilization and reconstruction processes.

The second axis has to do with mobilizing resources, both for building the capacity of regional actors and for development. In fact, we must relocate development to the center of any conflict prevention strategy.

In conclusion, I would like to say that Algeria is pleased with the will expressed this morning by the Secretary-General to make the settlement of the conflicts in Darfur, Somalia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Western Sahara one of the priorities of his mandate and his intention to implement a series of measures to reinforce United Nations capacities in the area of conflict prevention.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Japan.

Mr. Shinyo (Japan): I would like to begin by thanking the delegation of the Republic of the Congo for having taken the initiative in organizing this debate on the role of the Security Council in conflict prevention and resolution, in particular in Africa. The situations in Darfur and Somalia remain critical, and in many instances consolidating peace after a conflict has ended is a challenge. The debate today is therefore most timely.

Today, I would like to touch upon three issues, namely the role of the Security Council in conflict prevention and resolution, relations with the African Union, and the efforts of Japanese Government in this area.

We need a comprehensive approach to conflict prevention — one that not only addresses the problem from the political, economic, and social perspectives, but also takes into account elements such as the rule of law and humanitarian activities. And, given the wide

range of actors involved, it is essential to coordinate what they do in order to ensure that the overall effort has coherence.

The Security Council has been holding thematic debates focusing on the different elements that can trigger conflicts: small arms, food security, climate change, energy and natural resources, for example. We welcome such discussions and think it is important to try to translate their outcomes into concrete action.

In order to arrive at more effective means of conflict prevention, the Security Council should further develop cooperative relations with relevant organizations within as well as outside the United Nations. To that end, the Council should enhance its relationship with the Peacebuilding Commission, one of its subsidiary bodies, which plays an important role in the consolidation of peace and nation-building. And in no area is that more important than in preventing a conflict from recurring in a country where it has finally been brought to an end. In particular, the Council should refer to the Commission the task of following up on problems relating to the consolidation of peace that were discussed in the thematic debate on that subject. More specifically, it might request the Commission to provide an action-oriented advisory opinion with regard to ways to promote coordination among organizations and activities in the area of conflict prevention.

In the area of the prevention of armed conflict and mediation in Africa, the role of the African Union (AU) and subregional organizations has been growing, and we commend them for their efforts. It is necessary for the international community to support such undertakings, which are demonstrations of regional ownership. As for the United Nations and the role it should play, it is important for the Mediation Support Unit established within the Department of Political Affairs to further enhance its partnership with relevant regional organizations, including the AU, and for the United Nations mediator to play a role in tying together the efforts of the various actors in the area of mediation.

With regard to peacekeeping, the United Nations Secretariat is already at work developing concrete cooperative projects with the AU Commission pursuant to the framework for the latter's 10-year capacity-building programme. In the area of conflict prevention and mediation, it is also important to promote cooperation between the two organizations by looking carefully at what kind of added value the United Nations can provide.

As for the peacekeeping operations carried out by regional organizations, I believe that true ownership is possible only when an organization is able to sustain its activities on its own. To that end, the international community should work to enhance the capacity of regional organizations. The Group of Eight (G-8) and other bodies have already made such efforts, but it is to be hoped that in the future, we will see more sharing of information by regional organizations and more communication regarding experiences and lessons learned by countries contributing troops to United Nations operations.

When it comes to financial support for the peacekeeping operations conducted by regional organizations, in principle, every such organization should be responsible for its own costs. In those instances in which the United Nations examines the possibility of offering financial support, the Council should consider the advisability and modality of support on a case-by-case basis, taking into account whether such support would be consistent with the principles that govern United Nations peacekeeping operations, and also taking steps to obtain the views of major States that are not members of the Council — in particular, major financial contributors, when the subject is financial support — so as to ensure transparency.

Japan has always sought to understand the root causes of conflicts. In order to emancipate people from fear and poverty, and to assist in creating a society where people can live their lives with dignity, we have been making financial contributions through the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security, the United Nations Democracy Fund and the Peacebuilding Fund. Japan has also been working to enhance awareness of the importance of peace consolidation through the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) process and, to that end, offering bilateral and multilateral assistance in such areas as the collection of small arms, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and the response to landmines, as well as reintegration through community development based on the principle of human security. In addition, we provide significant support to the African Union and subregional organizations in Africa in the area of capacity-building and South-South

cooperation. We intend to continue to extend such assistance.

Japan has been Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission since June of this year and will become a State party to the International Criminal Court in October. In those capacities, and for all the reasons I have outlined, we are determined to address the issue of conflict prevention and resolution in a more active way. To that end, Japan will host, in April of next year, the G-8 development ministers' meeting; in May, the fourth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD IV); and in July, the G-8 Hokkaido Toyako summit. In those forums and elsewhere, we intend to continue to take up the challenges that Africa is facing as a matter of central importance to the entire international community.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now call on the representative of Benin.

Mr. Ehouzou (Benin) (*spoke in French*): My delegation thanks you, Mr. President, for having organized this public debate on the topic "maintenance of international peace and security: role of the Security Council in conflict prevention and resolution, in particular in Africa". I particularly commend the Secretary-General for the important introductory statement he made this morning, which reflects his great interest in the subject and particularly in our continent, Africa.

Conflict prevention is an essential aspect of the Security Council's mandate emanating from Chapter VI of the Charter and, more specifically, its Article 34. The Council has made considerable efforts to meet the challenges identified. Its various initiatives are based on the 10 principles of conflict prevention set out in the Secretary-General's first report on the subject (S/2001/574), dated 7 June 2001, to which are added the recently defined criteria for the exercise by the international community of the responsibility to protect.

The measures taken by the Security Council have had a major objective: preventing the resurgence of the conflicts it seeks to resolve. The establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission, together with the General Assembly, also had the same motivation. Its efforts to help countries emerging from conflict to strengthen the rule of law and achieve reconstruction and sustainable development are praiseworthy.

The adoption of resolution 1625 (2005) — to which my Algerian colleague just referred — during the Security Council summit held on 14 September 2005 was aimed primarily at strengthening the Council's capacity to take effective measures to prevent fragile States experiencing difficulties from relapsing into armed conflict by helping them to reverse negative trends and, with the international community's support, to climb back towards the desired stability. The need for more effective action on this front is supported by consensus owing to an awareness of the inherent threat to our collective security caused by State failures in fragile countries. Among the important instruments highlighted by the resolution in that regard are the periodic reports and the substantive reports that the Secretary-General, pursuant to Article 99 of the Charter, is invited to submit to the Council on the regions where the risk of conflict exists.

The reports are intended to allow the Council to identify cases where operational prevention measures are required; for example in the form of awareness raising political missions or mediation missions and preventive deployment, where there is a risk that substantial violence may erupt. The Mediation Support Unit within the Department for Political Affairs (DPA) is, in our view, an embryonic structure that must be developed by the Secretariat to provide the Security Council with the information it requires in order to fully assume its responsibilities in the sphere of conflict prevention. The Unit should be provided at a central level with sufficient human resources to achieve the desired performance. It should also be able to rely on extension units to be deployed in the regions involved and in the target countries.

Thus, subregional offices such as the one based in Dakar should be established in all risk zones. Likewise, closer cooperation should be considered with early warning systems and regional conflict-prevention mechanisms to more effectively share and rationally utilize information.

Furthermore, there is the strategic assessment of conflict risk that the Secretary-General is invited to assist risk countries in carrying out and the establishment of measures agreed upon on that basis. Those instruments create a prime framework for the coordination of actions at the operational level by the principal organs of the United Nations, by States and by United Nations programmes and agencies.

We must carry out an in-depth study of the matter within the framework of the Security Council seminar on conflict-prevention strategy announced for November 2007. That will make it possible to find the best way to promote systematic coordination and create a synergy between bilateral and multilateral action in the sphere of conflict prevention. In that context we can define a common view that meets the requirements for rationality and coherence to underpin, among others, structural prevention actions to be undertaken to tackle the root causes of the crisis situations in the countries involved. We reaffirm the considerable interest of Benin in the forum for conflict prevention proposed by the Secretary-General, which should provide an opportunity for the necessary, regular gathering of actors involved in conflict prevention.

Coordination is also essential in order to enhance the effective implementation of systemic prevention measures to tackle external factors which may contribute to the emergence of conflicts, such as unlawful arms trafficking, unlawful exploitation of natural resources, trafficking of all types and money-laundering. That would give greater authority to international legality strengthened by more active involvement of the International Criminal Court, in particular in the fight against violations of international humanitarian law.

The importance of cooperation between the United Nations and regional conflict-prevention bodies should be emphasized in that connection. Decisive initiatives taken by the Economic Community of West African States in the early 1990s to deal with conflicts in West Africa have led to similar actions in other regions and to the establishment within the African Union of a complete African peace and security architecture throughout the continent. Cooperation with the African Union and its subregional communities should rest on decisive implementation of the provisions of Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter. Security Council resolution 1631 (2005) spelled out those modalities.

It is clear that the United Nations system in conducting peacekeeping operations has, until recently, operated with marginal involvement by regional organizations. The time has come to make the necessary changes in order to make it possible for the organizations to fully play their role in the collective security system established by the Charter — both in terms of the doctrine of peace operations and in the allocation of related resources. There is reason to welcome the support programmes implemented to build the capacity of the African Union in that regard, as well as the decision taken to introduce an annual meeting of the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union. We also welcome the practice of appointing joint special representatives in countries in crisis or in situations of post-conflict, as occurred in Darfur with the appointment of the former foreign minister of Congo to conduct the African Union-United Nations hybrid operation.

The last point to be discussed constitutes a real challenge to the viability of the peace and security architecture of the African Union. The problem has to do with the coordination of its subregional conflict prevention mechanisms. In that connection, the African Union needs to ensure that it has the means to exercise its position in regard to subregional mechanisms in order to ensure harmonious coordination with the Security Council at the operational level. That issue also deserves an in-depth study in terms of defining the practical modalities for achieving the desired coordination.

We urge the Secretary-General to consider — in conjunction with the President of the African Union Commission — ways of guiding the actions of Member States and to ensure that the United Nations can achieve a level of effectiveness that is in keeping with the current stakes in conflict prevention.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of the United Republic of Tanzania.

Mr. Mahiga (United Republic of Tanzania): I should congratulate you, Sir, for your election to the presidency this month, and also extend felicitations and congratulations to China for their successful stewardship of this body last month. My delegation wishes to thank the delegation of the Republic of the Congo for organizing this open debate on a topic of particular importance to us.

The primary responsibility of the Security Council is not only the maintenance of international peace and security, but also to promote the peace that it seeks to maintain. Promoting the establishment of peace involves, in essence, the prevention of the conditions and causes of conflict. Compared to the multitudes of initiatives and undertakings to resolve

conflicts by both the United Nations and regional organizations, initiatives to prevent conflicts in the past sixty years have been relatively few and far apart. There has been focus on conflict resolution, but not equal focus on prevention. The strategies for conflict resolution have, therefore, remained underdeveloped.

The 2005 World Summit established the Peacebuilding Commission, which seeks to prevent relapses into conflict in post-conflict situations. This is commendable and necessary, given the many recurrences of conflict after successful and costly peacekeeping missions. Peacebuilding is prevention in the second instance. We should equally pay similar attention in the first instance to conflict prevention in order to contain simmering conflict situations from reaching a critical mass and breaking into violent conflicts.

It is probably time for the Security Council and the Secretary-General to launch an initiative similar to the Peacebuilding Commission, one fully dedicated to developing a comprehensive strategy for conflict prevention in partnership with regional organizations. There are already various inter-governmental and non-governmental initiatives aimed at conflict prevention, but they are fragmented and under-resourced. A comprehensive conflict prevention strategy would complete the three pillars of the peace and security architecture of the United Nations consisting of conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding.

My country has practical experience of the negative impact of conflicts. Tanzania is located within a region that has a long history of many deadly conflicts. The United Nations has been very helpful to us in our efforts to resolve the conflicts in the Great Lakes region. The United Nations contribution has been particularly useful in the organization of the two International Conferences on the Great Lakes Region. The first took place in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, in 2004 and the second in Nairobi in 2006. The conferences grew out of the need to have a comprehensive regionally designed process and strategy that encompasses all aspects from peace prevention, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and sustained development. As an outcome of the conferences, the region was finally able to sign the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region. The regional pact bears elements of all the three pillars of the peace and security architecture.

An executive secretariat has now been established with the objective of coordinating and implementing the Pact. It is expected that, upon its ratification, full implementation of the projects listed in the regional programme of action will begin. In the meantime, plans are underway, in consultation with the African Development Bank, on how to render operational the Special Fund for Reconstruction and Development of the Great Lakes region. As of now, the secretariat has managed to secure political and diplomatic support from regional and subregional groupings and international partners such as the United Nations system, the African Union, the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the East African Community, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the Group of Friends of the Great Lakes Region.

We need to devise a practical and effective strategy that can address the root causes and underlying conditions of conflicts in a comprehensive manner. This underlines the importance of having a holistic approach to prevention, one that addresses the linkages between development and security and recognizes the nexus between the two. Let us build an effective global partnership between States and institutions that can work in unison to prevent and resolve violent conflicts.

The close linkages between security, development and human rights have revealed the imperative of an integrated approach to conflict prevention, resolution and peacebuilding. It is therefore important to examine how best to promote peace and the sustained rule of law in post-conflict societies.

The establishment of the permanent International Criminal Court (ICC) was a crucial step. It provides legal measures for dealing with the suspects of international crimes and thus assists in combating the culture of impunity. For the first time in history, the ICC has provided the international community with an institution that addresses the most heinous international crimes and thus ensures that the gravest international crimes do not go unpunished. Its mandate to try and to sentence the highest and the mightiest can be considered a deterrent to potential tyrants and the prevention of man- or woman-made crises in the world.

The relevance of peacebuilding, for example, rests on the fact that lasting peace in a country torn by violence cannot be achieved unless and until the

destroyed infrastructure is reconstructed. Therefore, any discussion on conflict prevention would not be complete without a discussion on institutional and resource challenges in post-conflict peacebuilding with a view to strengthening coherence and consistency of the Security Council's actions. It is in this regard that we have supported and actively contributed to the creation of the Peacebuilding Commission, as well as the Peacebuilding Support Office within the Secretariat. We shall give the same kind of support to any initiatives by this Council or by the Secretary-General in the area of conflict prevention.

The challenge here is how to build an effective partnership between the United Nations system and other actors for a well-coordinated role in conflict prevention. United Nations partnership with the African Union and African subregional arrangements such as the Great Lakes region, the Economic Community of West African Nations (ECOWAS), IGAD and SADC has been quite exemplary in the areas of peacemaking and peacekeeping. We are happy that this important collaboration has now been extended to the area of post-conflict peacebuilding as well.

In conclusion, my delegation wishes to recognize the special attention that the United Nations is paying to African conflicts. We are particularly appreciative of the growing partnerships with the African Union in conflict resolution, peacekeeping and now peacebuilding. However, we have to display the same spirit and greater commitment to conflict prevention.

We want to thank you, once again, for providing us this opportunity to participate in this important debate.

The President (*spoke in French*): I give the floor to the representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

Mr. Ben-Shaban (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): First of all, Mr. President, I would like to congratulate you on your effective handling of the work of the Council this month. I also wish to congratulate your predecessor, the Chinese Ambassador, for the wise way in which he conducted the work of the Council last month.

Mr. President, your initiative to organize this debate on conflict prevention and resolution in Africa comes at the right time, considering that Africa is the theatre of a number of developments. Consequently, the Council's desired role in Africa must be reviewed and compared to efforts to prevent conflict in Africa in order to help that continent overcome its difficulties and surmount its obstacles.

Every day the international community increasingly acknowledges the importance of dealing with the conflicts that arise in certain parts of Africa and the need to settle them peacefully. This means that the international community is becoming more aware of the importance of dealing with the root causes of these conflicts, of the link that exists between them, and of reform, reconstruction and sustainable development and the role these play in solidifying peace.

It should be kept in mind that effective prevention and recovery strategies require the establishment of a comprehensive approach through which a series of measures can be undertaken — including, for example, policy, humanitarian and institutional measures and steps to strengthen sustainable development, eradicate poverty and promote national reconciliation, good governance, democracy, the rule of law and respect for and protection of human rights.

In resolution 1625 (2005) the Security Council, reaffirming its responsibility for international peace and security, expressed its determination to strengthen United Nations effectiveness in the area of the prevention of armed conflict and to follow up situations that could result in armed conflict. However, there is still much for the Council to do in resolving those most complex issues in the international arena, which entail overlapping historical, political and social factors, as well as the negative effects of colonization in that continent.

Given the special nature of conflicts in Africa and the overlapping of the numerous factors to which I have just referred, the establishment of regional and subregional organizations in Africa has effectively contributed to resolving some problems and ending others. That is because those organizations possess the necessary knowledge and are in a position to understand the various dimensions of the conflicts on the continent. My delegation therefore supports the current trend of allowing regional organizations to plan a larger role in the maintenance of peace and security on the African continent, with United Nations participation.

If cooperation between the Council and those organizations is carried out in a methodical and institutional manner, that should lead to a great deal of interaction, experience-sharing and joint efforts to help significantly in resolving African conflicts. The basis for such cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations consists in community of purpose and integration of effort in dealing with the challenges facing the establishment of peace and security in Africa.

Since its inception in 1999, the African Union has steadily worked to improve its role of a partner of the United Nations and its cooperation with United Nations peacekeeping missions. It has contributed proactively to mediation and reconciliation and reconstruction efforts in a number of African countries, including Angola, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Sudan, Uganda and Somalia, to name a few.

The African Union has played an essential role in the maintenance of international peace and security, thereby lightening the Council's burden. We at the United Nations should therefore render greater support to the African Union and cooperate with it. The United Nations should respond positively to its need to build up its peacebuilding capacity and to finance its operations.

General Assembly resolution 60/1, adopted at the 2005 World Summit, in fact encourages such initiatives by the African Union and subregional organizations in the areas of conflict prevention, resolution and mediation, with United Nations help. Whereas Security Council resolution 1631 (2005) reaffirmed the Council's primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, it also recognized the increasing contribution made by regional organizations.

My country has always supported efforts to prevent conflicts or resolve them peacefully, in accordance with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and the norms of international law. Libya has acted as a key mediator in resolving a number of African conflicts and disputes. It has effectively enshrined the principle of the peaceful resolution of disputes, making an effort to mediate and end conflicts in a number of countries, including Chad, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Sudan.

My country hopes that greater efforts will be devoted to conflict prevention in Africa so that African countries can concentrate on development issues and on achieving prosperity and dignified lives for their peoples.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Gabon.

Mr. Moungara Moussotsi (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): I should like to join previous speakers in congratulating you, Mr. President, as well as the entire Congolese delegation for its excellent performance in the Security Council and for the brilliant presidency of this important United Nations organ for the month of August. We also wish to congratulate you for organizing today's debate and for the quality of the document circulated to underpin our discussion with regard to the role of the Security Council in preventing conflict, particularly in Africa.

I should also like to thank the Permanent Representative of People's Republic of China for his outstanding presidency of the Council in July. I would also like to wish every success to the new representative of France and his team, who will preside over the Security Council during September 2007.

Conflict prevention should be the primary function of the United Nations, and specifically of the Security Council, as it carries out its mission to maintain international peace and security. Although the United Nations has in the past limited itself to acting as a firefighter, in recent years it has had limited success in emphasizing prevention.

Since the issuance of the Secretary-General's excellent report (S/1998/318) entitled "The causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa", several ideas have been proposed regarding the crucial question of conflict prevention and the role of the Security Council as regards peace and security, especially in Africa. The report also included several positive concrete measures to prevent and resolve conflicts in Africa. While it emphasized the need to eradicate the causes of conflict in such areas as governance, human rights and democracy, the report also underscored the crucial need to address such matters as combating poverty and the illegal flow of small arms and light weapons.

Poverty poses the ongoing threat of discontentment, which can easily be exploited by the enemies of peace to destabilize States. There is therefore an urgent need to assist African countries, as well as other countries, undergoing economic difficulties. It is therefore essential that we support development programmes by increasing official development assistance, reducing the debt burden, increasing the price of commodities and raw materials from developing countries and ensuring access to the markets of developed countries for the goods of developing countries. Neglecting those considerations runs the risk of further marginalizing developing countries, undermining their efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and putting at further risk of conflict and, as a result, of destabilization.

With the support of the United Nations, as it should be recognized, the countries of Africa have put in place prevention mechanisms and other confidence-building measures aimed at establishing an atmosphere conducive to peace and security, which is essential to development. For its part, as the document circulated by the President indicates, the Central African subregion has, among other things, put in place an early-warning mechanism and a multilateral force for Central Africa. However, these mechanisms run up against the financial difficulties afflicting the Member States that also have to deal with other major challenges, not only in terms of development but also on the health front, in particular with regard to the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

However, these prevention and conflict resolution measures introduced in Africa have been effective. This has been borne out by the Ouagadougou agreements, which recently brought an end to the crisis in Côte d'Ivoire, and the Inter-African Mission to Monitor the Implementation of the Bangui Agreements (MISAB) in 1966. It is unfortunate that in the latter case, the efforts made both by MISAB and by the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic were not supported by donors in the context of peacebuilding, despite the promises that were made during the international conference held in 2000 on the subject of the Central African Republic.

The Peacebuilding Commission, which aims at helping countries to achieve the difficult transition from war to peace, was established at an opportune time to deal with this type of situation. My country welcomes the involvement of the financial institutions in the work of that body.

In its efforts to promote a culture of conflict prevention, the Security Council should also ensure that all member States — and I do mean all Member States — respect the established weapons embargo regimes. This is necessary in order to stop weapons from falling into the hands of small unscrupulous groups who use them to destabilize democratic regimes, spread insecurity or plunder natural resources or other wealth. In this regard, the measures taken under the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme to issue certificates of origin to combat the sale of blood diamonds should be scrupulously applied and translated into reality.

In conclusion, my delegation considers that while it is necessary to promote social justice through democracy and the sharing of the fruits of expansion, at the same time greater coordination between the Security Council and regional arrangements under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations is also vital. We are happy to note in this regard the agreement that was entered into between the United Nations and the African Union in September 2006. Likewise, specific support to regional mechanisms for the promotion and maintenance of peace will make a contribution to preventing and resolving conflicts. My delegation also urges that the proposal by the former Secretary-General contained in paragraph 118 of his progress report on conflict prevention (A/60/891) should also be taken into account.

Again, Mr. President, my congratulations to your delegation for the hard work you have done.

The President (*spoke in French*): After consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

> "The Security Council, bearing in mind its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, acknowledges the importance of the settlement of disputes by peaceful means and promoting necessary preventive action in response to threats to international peace and security.
>
> "The Security Council recognizes the important role of regional organizations in the

prevention, management and resolution of conflicts in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations as well as its relevant resolutions and Presidential statements. In this regard it welcomes the increasing cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union.

"The Security Council recalls that the prevention of conflict remains a primary responsibility of Member States.

"The Security Council reaffirms its commitment to the full and effective implementation of resolution 1625 (2005) on conflict prevention, particularly in Africa, requests the Secretary-General to report to the Council within sixty days on options for further implementation of its resolution 1625 (2005), and recalls the relevant Presidential statements, in particular S/PRST/2006/39, S/PRST/2006/45, S/PRST/2006/57, S/PRST/2007/1, S/PRST/2007/3, S/PRST/2007/7, S/PRST/2007/22 and S/PRST/2007/24.

"The Security Council also stresses the need to carry out efforts to increase women's participation as contributors and beneficiaries in conflict prevention and peacebuilding. In this regard, it calls for the further implementation of its resolution 1325 (2000).

"The Security Council notes the varied nature of conflicts, which involve not only conflicts between States and within States, but also new emerging threats, and thus reiterates its determination to strengthen its role in preventing and resolving conflict in all its forms.

"The Security Council recalls its previous Presidential statements concerning the various factors and causes that play a role in inciting, worsening or prolonging conflicts in Africa, and in particular the factors and causes that have been highlighted and addressed by the Council.

"The Security Council supports the comprehensive and global approach recommended by the Secretary-General in his report on the prevention of armed conflict (A/60/891), namely: structural prevention, to address the root causes of conflict; operational prevention, to ensure the effective operation of early warning mechanisms, mediation, humanitarian access and response, the protection of civilians and targeted sanctions in the face of immediate crises; and systemic prevention, to prevent existing conflicts from spilling over into other States.

"In this context, effective coordination between and within United Nations organs, programmes, funds and agencies involved in policy formulation and implementation is vital for ensuring better coherence of the existing mechanisms and the appropriate balance between peacekeeping operations and preventive activities. Such coordination should be undertaken taking into consideration the ongoing debate on how to improve systemic coherence within the United Nations.

"The Security Council welcomes recent developments regarding the long-term prevention of conflict, including best practice and policy work on: security sector reform; disarmament, demobilization and reintegration; transitional justice and the rule of law; electoral practices; peacebuilding; democratic governance; development; humanitarian assistance and protection; and the safe and voluntary return of refugees and internally displaced persons. The Council encourages further progress and greater coherence on these issues, and requests the Secretary-General to include in the report requested above proposals for how better to coordinate the positions and expertise of the relevant United Nations organs, programmes, funds and agencies, including through regular interaction with the Member States.

"The Security Council notes the recommendations in the report of the Secretary-General on the prevention of armed conflict (A/60/891) welcomes the efforts that have been made to strengthen the risk assessment and conflict prevention capacities of the United Nations, and encourages the Secretary-General to continue those efforts in order to improve the United Nations' early warning, mediation support and other preventive activities in Africa and around the world. In this connection, the Security Council stresses the crucial role of the Special Advisers to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide and Mass Atrocities and on matters relating to the prevention and

resolution of conflict as well as, where appropriate, the contribution of United Nations bodies such as the Peacebuilding Commission and the Human Rights Council.

"The Security Council welcomes the fact that the Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution, particularly in Africa, has taken the initiative of giving greater thought to these questions and taken a special interest in the problem of the elaboration of an effective global conflict prevention strategy — the subject of a seminar to be held in November 2007.

"The Security Council stresses the importance of a regional approach to conflict prevention, as applicable, and in this connection welcomes the growing contribution being made by regional organizations in addressing issues of peace and security, and looks forward to the report of the Secretary-General, in consultation with the relevant regional organizations, in particular the African Union, and pursuant to PRST/2007/7, on specific proposals on how the United Nations can better support arrangements for further cooperation and coordination with regional organizations on Chapter VIII arrangements, in order to contribute significantly to the common security challenges in the areas of concern and to promote the deepening and broadening of dialogue and cooperation between the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union.

"The Security Council underlines the need for a stronger and more structured relationship between the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, contributing to the achievement of the goals of peace and stability in the context of the arrangements provided for in Chapter VIII of the Charter. The Council thus welcomes the agreement reached between the United Nations and the African Union at Addis Ababa on 16 November 2006 which consolidates the basis of partnership necessary to address the underlying causes of conflict. The Council also reaffirms the joint communiqué agreed with the African Union Peace and Security Council on 16 June 2007 (S/2007/386).

"The Security Council welcomes the work done by the African Union to set up its Panel of the Wise and Continental Early Warning System, which are key components of the African Peace and Security Architecture.

"The Security Council also recognizes the important contribution of subregional bodies and underscores the need for African subregional bodies to enhance their capacities in early warning and conflict prevention in order to allow these important actors to respond more promptly to the emerging threats to security in their areas.

"At the same time, the Security Council encourages Member States to make further efforts to ensure adequate consultation between civil society and national institutions, on the one hand, and the United Nations and the international community, on the other hand, so as to be better equipped to address the global character of questions of peace and security".

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2007/31.

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 5.10 p.m.